

Bay Delta Conservation Plan (BDCP)

Steering Committee Meeting

June 29, 2007, 9:00 a.m. to 12:00 p.m.

Resources Agency Bldg., Room 1131

Meeting Notes

Associated documents/handouts:

- Agenda
- Outreach Workgroup handout: Public Outreach Process for BDCP and draft Request for Qualifications for Public Involvement and Outreach Program
- Science Workgroup handout: Proposed Workshop Topics for the BDCP Independent Science Advisory Process
- Draft June-December 2007 Schedule for Development of BDCP Conservation Strategy
- Conservation Strategy Workgroup handout: Discussion Draft, Evaluating the Conservation Options, Proposed Approach
- Steering Committee (SC) 6/1/07 Meeting Notes

Action Items and Key Decisions

- Science: Denise Reed has been appointed Lead Scientist; proposed science advisory process is accepted with changes and will move quickly forward to workshops and reports, led by co-facilitators. D. Reed will provide initial review of current Conservation Strategy Options Evaluation.
- Outreach Workgroup will release a Request for Qualifications this week for public outreach contract, and is currently drafting a Notice of Intent in the Federal Register for preparing an HCP. They will work with fisheries agencies to apply for additional funding under Section 6.
- SC approved CS Options evaluation approach proposed by the CS Workgroup, and will review the hydrodynamic model parameters at the next meeting.

Updates

- 7/2: U.S. House of Representatives, Committee of Natural Resources, Subcommittee on Water and Power is holding hearing in Vallejo. Will Stelle will testify on behalf of BDCP.
- Federal court case on OCAP, *NRDC v. Kempthorne*: declarations will be presented to judge on 7/2.

Review of meeting summaries

6/1 Minor comments from DFG will be sent to SAIC for inclusions and revisions will be reviewed by SC at next meeting.

Outreach Workgroup

Karla Nemeth presenting. Draft Request for Qualifications has been prepared and will be sent to public relations firms next week. See Handouts and Associated Documents for draft. Comments from SC members should be sent to Beth Gerbutavicius at the

Resources Agency. The contract would scope outreach process for BDCP and upcoming scoping process for the EIR/EIS. Proposals will be reviewed, separated into phases, and allocated funding accordingly. Current funding available includes \$200,000 from DFG's Section 6 grant.

The next Section 6 nontraditional grant application phase will be open soon, so the Workgroup will work with DFG and USFWS to develop a proposal for continued funding.

Outreach Workgroup is also preparing a draft Notice of Intent that will be presented to SC on 7/13.

The Workgroup will set regular meetings and will announce the time/day through the Resources Agency staff.

Membership Workgroup

They are still in process of reviewing the two recent membership applications and will have recommendations for the SC at next meeting on 7/13.

Conservation Strategy (CS) Schedule

See also Handouts and Associated Documents.

Paul Cylinder presenting. Major Conservation Strategy activities and products are presented in the schedule in two-week intervals.

- Science advisors will be convened by mid-July.
- Ongoing coordination with other Delta planning processes.
- Approach to CS Options evaluation, working with agencies, we'll have that report ready for review in mid-July, will come to the committee 7/13 or 7/29.
- July-August SAIC team will conduct evaluation of the four Conservation Options; there has been extensive discussion in the Workgroup meetings about operational parameters to be used in hydrodynamic modeling. Those parameters will be presented to SC on 7/13 before quantitative analysis is conducted.
- Full evaluation report will be complete by end of August. It is expected that the Workgroup will review 9/4, and SC would receive it on 9/7.
- First report from science advisors report and Draft Existing Ecological Conditions report will be complete by end of summer. Along with the options evaluation these extensive products will be available by 9/21 to SC members. They will support consideration of Conservation Strategy Options during development of the CS Framework in the fall. DRMS risk analysis will be complete and help inform the CS process, as well.
- It is expected that the Draft CS Framework document will be complete by end of year.

K. Scarborough noted that multiple products will be in development concurrently; these will all support subsequent development of the CS Framework, which will include 1-2 CS Alternatives.

K. Scarborough also noted that in the next two months CS Workgroup will not need to meet weekly. BDCP management team is cognizant that several other Workgroups are very active right now and is trying to lighten the load of meetings for members.

Meeting calendar for all Workgroup and SC meetings is posted on the BDCP website.

Conservation Strategy Workgroup

Will Stelle and Paul Cylinder presenting. W. Stelle revised a draft summary of the proposed evaluation approach this week based on feedback from the CS Workgroup. See also Handouts and Associated Documents. The SAIC team will conduct an evaluation of the four CS options during July-August apply the 17 criteria developed for the bundle analysis

The evaluation will use qualitative and quantitative methods. Qualitative methods will apply current science and best professional judgment of teams of experts assembled by SAIC. The report will include thorough narrative description of the evaluated ability of each of the options to promote or retard the implementation of conservation actions, description of the analytical process, and cited sources of information.

Rough quantitative analysis will also be conducted in the form of single runs of some or all existing hydrodynamic models (CalSIM2, DSM2, RMA delta model) to roughly evaluate the performance of each of the options. SAIC team has identified flow parameters that are relevant for the modeling exercise; over the next week they will develop quantitative ranges or point estimates of high and low flows and timing of operations that will be employed in running the models. SC will review those ranges on 7/13. These are not positions or recommendation of any of the entities, but are expected to be approved by SC for the purposed of the evaluation only.

Discussion followed the presentation, with members noting that transparency and participation by wide range of experts is important to the analytical process. SAIC is working with experts from member entities and fisheries agencies in developing and carrying out the analysis.

There was general consensus that the 17 criteria should be open to minor revision in the next week prior to analysis, in order to best fit these criteria to the current BDCP information needs and CS options. Minor changes that will be included based on comments today from SC members include adding description of the hydrodynamic modeling in the biological criteria, using “range” in Item 6 (rather than only upper and lower bounds) and *de minimus* text changes. Additional comments or changes should be sent to Will Stelle as soon as possible.

Science Workgroup

Ann Hayden (co-chair), Bruce DiGennaro (co-facilitator) and Wayne Spencer (co-facilitator) presenting. Science Workgroup met Wednesday and recommended changes to

the science advisory process. B. DiGennaro and Denise Reed (lead scientist) met subsequently to develop an initial phase of science involvement prior to first science advisors workshop.

The recommended science advisory process was updated to incorporate complex BDCP information, scheduling, and process needs. In typical HCP/NCCP processes, one or two science workshops are held and one comprehensive report is produced. They suggest holding four science advisors' workshops timed relative to BDCP milestones and work products. The science reports may include directed, rapid-turnaround memos. Also see Handouts and Associated Documents.

The Workgroup recommends that the first workshop cover typical NCCP questions and outline broad guidelines, including conservation principles, biological communities, and available scientific information. Science advisors will receive key BDCP documents to date, including the Conservation Options and Planning Agreement. Science advisors' first report would be submitted around the same time as the Conservation Options evaluation so both can be used in developing the CS Framework document during fall 2007. The second workshop could focus on analytical methods and metrics to be used to analyze population and habitat quality effects, and to develop conservation measures for an NCCP. Third workshop could address scientific uncertainties and issues underlying the CS Framework. The fourth workshop could address monitoring and adaptive management. The timing and scope of the workshops are still evolving and will be iterative. Members should provide feedback and suggestions to B. DiGennaro or Wayne Spencer.

D. Reed will provide initial input into the approach to evaluate the Conservation Strategy Options and submit a memo to the SC, as suggested by the Workgroup and supported by the SC.

Members discussed and made several suggestions to the advisory process, including being concise and directed in the questions, indexing the science reports by question for ease-of-use, and analyzing uncertainty and limits of science early in the process. Substantial comments to the questions suggested for the first workshop should be submitted to D. Reed today. CFBF noted that predicted economic and agricultural effects from Conservation Strategy effects should be addressed early; K. Scarborough noted that will be included as a part of the Impact Analysis conducted in 2008.

Public Comments

Justin Frederickson. CFBF. The evaluation of options leading to one option seems to resemble an alternative process outside NEPA/CEQA process. How are you going to drill down and then get back to the one option?

Response from Marc Ebbin: The current CS Options are not Alternatives under NEPA/CEQA. BDCP is not making final decisions on anything yet, rather is trying to identify the best place to start the HCP/NCCP and NEPA/CEQA processes. Those will start in 2008 and follow typical process with public comment receipt and consideration.

Next Meeting

Friday, 7/13/07. Same time and location.

Introductions and Attendees

New attendees

Jason Peltier (alternate for Westlands)

Roger Patterson (replacing Tim Quinn for MWDSC)

Representatives

Karen Scarborough (Resources Agency)

Laura King Moon (State Water Contractors)

Paul Cylinder (SAIC)

Will Stelle (Resources Agency)

John Engbring (USFWS)

Ted Meyers (NOAA)

Tim Quinn (MWDSC)

Barbara McDonnell (DWR)

Carl Wilcox (DFG)

Ann Hayden (Environmental Defense)

Richard Roos-Collins (American Rivers, NHI)

Greg Thomas (Natural Heritage Institute)

Kim Delfino (Defenders of Wildlife)

Brent Walthall (KCWA)

Kenny Watkins (CFBF)

Campbell Ingram (TNC)

Walt Wadlow (SCVWD)

Sue Fry (USBR)

Tom Birmingham (Westlands)

Ara Azhderian (SLDMWD)

Marc Ebbin (Resources Agency)

John McCamman (DFG)

Jerry Johns (DWR)

Denise Reed (University of New Orleans, BDCP Lead Scientist)

By phone

Wayne Spencer (BDCP Science Facilitator)

Bruce DiGennaro (BDCP Science Facilitator)

Doug Wallace (EBMUD)

Gary Bobker (Bay Institute)

Michael Bean (Environmental Defense)

Jeff Russell (Mirant)

Melissa Helton (USFWS)